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tory the more it set up pretension to absolute infallibility. If the application of the dialectic method had been guarded from every error, Hegel himself, for instance, would not have set the example of altering the position of ideas in his system. Without the Logic, the danger would have become still greater.

For profound penetration into the essence of science, for sharp criticism of the delusions behind which scientism has taken refuge in order to preserve itself in the public mart as authority, for noble dignity of scientific temper, for spirited apprehension of the entire turning-point of the age,—the preface to Hegel's Phenomenology can only be compared with that which Kant introduced in the second edition of his Critique of Reason. This is its counterpart in literature.

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## THE LOGICAL QUESTION IN HEGEL'S SYSTEM.

Translated from the German of TRENDELENBURG, by THOS. DAVIDSON.

[*Continued from our last number.*—ED.]

In the first place, the *Negation* is the inborn impulse which drives pure thinking along from stage to stage. No sooner is a concept produced than it turns over, from its own inner nature, into its negation, and we have before us the problem of thinking a positive and a negative together. This problem is solved by the creation of a mediatory concept which reconciles the two antitheses. Thus the progress of the Dialectic is conditioned by the Negation.

The investigation showed that the applied negation cannot be a pure logical negation, the relation of *not-A* to *A*, but that it must be real opposition in order to produce a Contrary—an Opposition. But since the Contrary does not run off into indefinite contradiction or opposition, into mere unlimited negation, but is on the contrary another Positive, which, concrete and limited in itself, contains the negation of Another [somewhat] only as one relation, it became apparent at once that the real opposition—the negation of the Dialectic—was not to be reached in any merely logical way. Not only

was this shown in general terms, but the same demonstration was further applied to the most important concepts of the system (e.g. to repulsion and attraction, to whole and force, to substance and causality, to nature and spirit), and it was proved in the particular cases that the negativity always goes beyond its logical essence, and the opposition does not spring from the pure thought, as is pretended, but from the apprehensive intuition, which arbitrarily condenses the indefinite looseness of the logical negation into a positive form, and, in that form, seizes and holds it.

If, now, the antithesis is supposed to be evolved from the thesis by negation, so likewise thesis and antithesis are carried up by *Identity* to a concept which stands above them, and is designated as their truth. The identity, therefore, appears in the result as the real unity, as the force of concretion. If, however, we probe it to the bottom, we find that it is far short of what it professes to be; that it is nothing but the reflection of a relative, logical likeness — an abstraction which bleaches and blots out. *Becoming*, in Hegel's *Logic*, is the first act of identity, Being and Nothing being comprehended under it. Pure Being, we are told, is empty Being—Nothing; and empty Being is pure Being. The one is what the other is. The two are identical, and, thought as such, they are Becoming. In spite of this, this identity of the reflection is only a self-annihilating compromise, without a trace of living unity to transform in a real manner Being into Nothing, and Nothing into Being. It is the completed levelling of two concepts, viz. pure Being and empty Being, while it is anything but a case of mutual intus-susception or interpenetration. In such identity, the antitheses blunt each other, instead of bestirring themselves and becoming one as they should do. What is here summarized in the well-known example of dialectic Becoming, reappears, as the *Investigations* prove, in the most essential concepts of the system, e.g. where the Finite unites with itself in the Infinite; where the freedom of the concept is conjured out of the necessity of substance; where the idea is defined as the absolute unity of concept and objectivity. The power of unity over the greatest antitheses rests on the identity of such impotent assimilation. The real interpenetration is forced in. Compared with the boldness of

the idea of reconciling antitheses with each other, the proof which pure thought has to offer for the fact appears rather infirm. Its truth has its origin in something quite different from any such mere logical act.

Thus the hinges of the system break down.

The investigation showed further that *ad infinitum* procession, a mere indirect proof, was frequently misused in order to obtain a positive creation of an opposite. It turned out, likewise, that the Immediate, which cannot appear in the pure thought as sensuous, is nevertheless tacitly introduced into the sensuous apprehension.

After such results, the internal connection — the glory of the system — could not hold out. Notwithstanding, this too was subjected to a special investigation. Then, independently of the necessary consequences of the points already made, it became manifest in many other places that the intrinsic connection which asserts the self-development of science from its own most undisputed ground, viz. the concept, in opposition to knowledge derived from without, is merely appearance, bold assertion. When the determinations of science, in the dialectic and internal contemplation of the concept, had to make a step in advance, instead of doing this unassisted, they betrayed, when examined more closely, the foreign impulse of external experience. What ought to originate from itself is simply borrowed. Anticipations of concepts, and foreign matter, picked up at random, were shown to exist in the most important creations of the Dialectic; the former, for example, in Measure, in the Freedom of the Concept, in the Totality of the Unconditioned, in the Transition of the Idea into Nature, already frequently alluded to; the latter, in the logical treatment of Matter, in the logical categories of Mechanism, Chemistry, Life, &c. We are thus led to consider the relation of the dialectic method to the material of experience. Hegel had almost asserted, in regard to this, that the dialectic process presupposes the facts of experience, but that it exalts them into the true rational form. Who could have refrained from admiring, with an admiration amounting to astonishment, in Hegel himself—from his *Phenomenology* down to his posthumous *Lectures*—the extreme universality of his empirical knowledge! And no one asserted

that Hegel could have meant that the philosopher ought to "suck the world out of his finger-ends." But the question here was not one touching his subjective knowing or his opinions, but one relating to the objective relation of his absolute method; and then it was shown that this method, strictly confined to itself, and advancing by means of borrowed crutches, had, by its very nature, no opening, whether door or window, to let in experience, and because it nevertheless tacitly and stealthily opens a back door to it, it occupies an *uncritical* position to experience, with its indefinite expression regarding presupposition, and is perhaps more uncritical than unspeculative, but careful, Empiricism. It is impossible to find a place for experience, without making holes in the internal connection of the self-productive Concept.

The speculative method undertook to show that the process whereby the concepts were produced was likewise the process which produced the thing. Thus the dialectic and the genesis of the thing seemed necessarily to coincide. On closer examination, however, it became apparent that the dialectic process in most cases inverts the genesis of the thing, or passes over it without concern, and without touching it. In view of this surprising discrepancy, the advantage which had just been gained had to be abandoned, and refuge to be taken in a distinction which had not originally lain in the plan, that the *eternal* birth of the pure concept was not the temporal development of the becoming thing, and that the two did not necessarily coincide. The dialectic then admitted itself to be, in individual cases, a methodical *hysteron-proteron.*

If, in the dialectic method, the syllogism and its figures came to assume such importance that the *dictum* was trumpeted abroad, "God is a syllogism; the state is a syllogism; the planetary system is a syllogism," &c., on closer examination there turned out to be in this doctrine an obscurity and confusion which distinctly showed themselves in the application. Here too, in a word, the dialectic topsy-turvy showed itself in the very *dictum* itself. If we were to construe mental maladies according to the same type—if we were to say, for example, that Pietism unites itself with Mysticism to form Phariseeism, as the Hegelian terminology would express it,

we might also say, with equal right, "Everything irrational is a syllogism." Thus the doctrine has overshot itself.

After such results, neither the leading thought of the dialectic method nor the carrying out of it could be recognized, and the question now came to be, whether openly to abandon the philosophical prejudice of the present, or to refute the charges brought against the system.

So far, neither one thing nor the other was done. The former was difficult; along with the dialectic method, it would have been necessary to abandon Hegel's system as a system; for the two are one, just as the critical system and Kant's system are one. The second looked easier perhaps, and yet it did not take place. Perhaps silence was meant for a refutation.

Erdmann published his well thought-out *Outlines of Logic and Metaphysics* in 1841. In certain turns of phrase and remarks, he seemed to have reference to the *Investigations* just mentioned, nay, even in places to yield points to them. But he did not mention this fact, and left it to be guessed by the initiated. Erdmann changes several things in the matter, and almost everything in the expression, which he to some extent managed so dexterously as to take the point off any objection that had been made. But the *Investigations* had attacked the *thing* itself, and could hardly be brought to silence by a change in the mode of expression. Any one who will take the trouble to compare it with this new presentation may satisfy himself on the point. Besides this, it might easily be shown that the altered expressions, where they mean anything at all, imply a change of view, and an alteration in the thing. It would be desirable to see these differences discussed within the school itself, in order to show their magnitude. Erdmann's *Logic*, although written in the spirit of Hegel, is not altogether Hegel's old logic.

Treating matters in an opposite spirit, appeared in 1841 Werder's *Logic, a Commentary and Supplement to Hegel's Science of Logic.* It belongs to the idea of a commentary, that it shall smooth over difficulties and disentangle intricacies. Up to that time, all philosophical commentaries had been written with this purpose—e.g. commentaries on Aristotle, for thousands of years. *This* Commentary to Hegel's

*Logic* took no notice of the *Investigations*, directed against it, and probably did not consider the doubts expressed as worth discussion. As for the rest, he invented a new logical category, calling the opponents of the system "the Lord's heaviest cross," and those who could not accept the concept of God set up by the pure thinking, and therefore rejected it, "God's sorest suffering, a passion to which the history of the Passion is but a shadow." Still, there were some *innovations* in this Logic too, and, although it had appeared as a supplement, it was rather an *annihilation* of the original, as even the adherents of the system seemed to admit. Particularly remarkable was the correction which appeared at the very beginning. The identity of pure Being and Nothing in the production of Becoming had always excited opposition, and difficulties of various kinds had been found in it. Among other things, people had found it impossible to think the identity of Being and Nothing, because, after all, Nothing appeared to be *less* than pure Being—to be a *minus;* people could not conceive how two empty abstractions—pure Being and pure Nothing—could mutually complement each other, so as to form the concept of *Becoming.* These difficulties were settled by an emendation. It was asserted that Hegel had been wrong in holding the difference between pure Being and Nothing to be inexpressible—a mere opinion. The difference was quite considerable. It was discovered that Nothing is *more* than pure Being, a *plus;* that Nothing is the most comprehensive something. "In Nothing, Being, of itself, breaks the silence in itself. Nothing is Being's coming to consciousness, the rise of perception in it, its glance into itself, the salient point of its originality. In Nothing the sacred ambiguity of the emptiness of Being discloses itself. That it is nothing else than *Self-Being*, *Being-through-itself;* that it, singly and alone, is *full* of itself,—this is its emptiness, this is Nothing. Thus Nothing is Being's knowledge of its fulness, of its repletion from itself, of its free action, of its self-creation; and, stirring itself in itself, in the energy of this Knowing, Being is no longer Being, but Becoming." "When I say Nothing, I know more than when I say Being, because it *is* more; because it is Being revealing itself, bursting its husk—because it is *naked* Being, the spirit

of Being, Being in Being." Finally, when the Commentary declared the dialectic to be the "*Rêverie* of Logic," and treated it as such, pure thinking, as far at least as principle was concerned, became vague thinking. The Hegelian school has thus far allowed this Logic to pass muster, without rejecting or disowning it.

In fact, the great differences which subsist within the school seem all to rest, pretty much in the same way as the schisms in the Church used to do; the Church forgot these, when she had to combat with heretics or heathens outside.

Gabler gave a lengthy review of the *Logical Investigations* in the *Jahrbücher für wissenschaftliche Kritik*, Oct., 1841, No. 65 sq., Art. I. In this, however, he has criticised a result without its premises—the twentieth section, without the nineteen that precede it and form its basis. The dialectical question, in the first place, is not touched upon at all, my understanding of it being merely set aside as an "incomprehensible misunderstanding." As no harm is done by such assertions, we wait to see the proof of them in the second article; otherwise we might turn the tables and repeat the compliment of "incomprehensible misunderstanding." The aim of the criticisms is to show that the *Logical Investigations* know less of God than the dialectic method, which is absolutely and directly the thinking of God. This we willingly acknowledge, if the dialectic method be true; but we had proved that it is false, and therefore really knows nothing. If one, therefore, meant to argue in this way, he could not afford to omit the opposite proof. At all events, until it appears, his assertion has no foundation.

Other critics have taken it for granted that the whole question has been set at rest by this *veto* of Gabler's. For example, we find in a polemical article: "The main objection, derived from Hegel's unexplained assumption of movement, is developed in the *Logical Investigations*, and duly weighed by Gabler in a criticism of that work." The truth is, that in that criticism not a word is said about such objections, and we cannot say that we at all admire the spirit of such tactics. No explanation, such as the above words would imply as having been made, was intended by Gabler, who, at the end of his criticism, openly states that he will deal with the

heavy charges brought against Hegel's philosophy, in a second article.

In support of the dialectic method, which thinks the thought of God, reference is repeatedly made to the Christian Logos (Cf. *inter al.* Gabler's Criticism, p. 570). We take the reference to mean this: Through Him and for Him all is created, and He is before all, and all exists in Him. If, then, He be the head of the body—that is, of the Church—He belongs to us, and we may comprehend Him in pure thought. This conclusion will hardly be permitted to any one who understands the Christian Logos in the sense demanded by the entire context. The same Logos that in the beginning was God—the world-creating Logos—redeems men from the dominion of darkness and sin. It is this function that is the inheritance of the Church; but from this to attempt to authenticate, by a sort of Christian testimony, the act of the pure idea, which produces the world-creating Logos out of itself, is something quite new, and hardly coincides with the notion of the Apostle Paul, who openly says to the Church that "now we know but *in part*," and "behold but as through a glass darkly." If from words like these any one were to conclude that the Christian view of the Universe was universal skepticism, he would be as far from the truth as he who should cite the Christian Logos in authentication of the stand-point of the speculative method. Such confusion of thought only tends to warp unbiassed investigation.

Reference has been made by various persons, and on various occasions, to the *Phenomenology*, as properly preceding the *Logic* of Hegel. "The Thinking which in the *Phenomenology* works itself up out of the phenomena, in the *Logic* produces itself freely — plays with itself" (Werder, p. 25). This is, perhaps, implied in Gabler's remark (Art. I., p. 519), that in the *à priori* (process) of dialectic movement, "man's reproductive *reflection* has already *swallowed* the whole of the *à posteriori*" (das menschliche reproductive *Nach*denken [habe] das ganze Aposteriorische *bereits im Leibe*). The expression can signify nothing but the digestion in the *Phenomenology*.

As to the *Phenomenology*, there seem to be only two positions possible for it. Either it is a link in the system, and

then it is a part of the philosophy of the subjective spirit—and this, indeed, is the position assigned to it by Hegel in the *Encyclopedia*,—or it is a propædeutic, meant to educate the consciousness up to the speculative stand-point, in which case its place is before the system. and it stands in the external relation of an introduction.

Hegel, in the *Encyclopedia*, produced his system as a whole, and it is the most complete outline of a system, whether we consider the whole or the parts, that the history of philosophy is acquainted with. We must accept the relations in which he here places the different branches to one another, as he gives them. Since then, in the *Encyclopedia*, the *Phenomenology* follows long after the *Logic*, the *Nature-Philosophy* and the *Anthropology* coming in between, we perpetrate a bad piece of anticipation if we appeal to the *Phenomenology* for the investigation of the dialectical method laid down in the *Logic*—an anticipation which rends Hegel's system to pieces. In view of the great unity which was Hegel's aim, we have thought it our duty to follow the *Encyclopedia*, which was so often revised by him.

If we assume the second stand-point, and consider the *Phenomenology* as a propædeutic to the absolute method, or to the stand-point of Speculative Logic, then it stands outside of the system, and has, as a preparatory exercise, a subjective importance, but no influence on the objective foundation of the system, which, on the contrary, aims, starting with the *Logic*, to produce itself from itself, and to comprehend itself in itself. The *Phenomenology*, then, is a propædeutic to the *Logic*, as creeping is a propædeutic to walking, arithmetic a propædeutic to the logical syllogism. In this case no less than in the other, the appeal to the *Phenomenology* is an inconsistency, a mere subterfuge, which, however, does not escape the eye of the clear-sighted.

If the appeal to the *Phenomenology* were admissible, this work ought to be always read *before* the *Logic*, which is never done, or, if it ever is, only by way of introduction. If it were so read, there would result a somewhat odd circumstance. In the course of the whole, certain sections would occur *thrice;* e.g. life, first in the *Phenomenology* as a phenomenon, then in the *Logic* as an idea, and lastly in the *Phi-*

*losophy of Nature.* What is the object of this? It is bad enough that life, for example, is treated twice, once in the *Logic* and once in the *Philosophy of Nature;* and it has been shown that the idea of life produced from the pure concept is nothing more or less than intuition—which, indeed, is contemned, but which, in a clarified and enfeebled form, is accepted. If we admit, as was shown, that the *means* employed by the dialectic method are false, it is of no avail to appeal to the dialectic Phenomenology. Altogether, people should not be always quite so ready with the *Phenomenology* in their talk; it is, and ever will be, a *liber laudatus magis quam lectus.*

Thus, likewise, is barred the attempt to defend the dialectic method by the aid of the *Phenomenology.*

But its defenders hold in reserve a brilliant retreat for themselves, by ascribing all objections brought against the absolute dialectic to mere imagination, which, in its very nature, say they, is incapable of reaching the pure concept. Any one who questions the products of the absolute concept, occupies the stand-point of the imagination, and, therefore, has no right to speak. When the pure concept is hedged round in this way, it becomes as unapproachable as the Holy of Holies. All possibility of coming to any understanding ceases, and one might as well try to make something out of the illuminations of a visionary, who treats all opposition precisely in this way, as out of speculative science. Be this as it may, all objections—to speak in the language of the school—are due to an "immanent" criticism of the concept, to its own demands, assertions, and consequences.

Never, in the history of philosophy, did the logical question assume so much importance as at present. Whereas, formerly, the attack had been directed against "the speculative theology" flank, it now approaches closer to the centre, which supports the whole—the *Logic.* The contest regarding the logical question is a contest for the existence of the system. All the consequences which have developed themselves from Hegel, stand or fall with it.

Profound investigation of objective reality and perspicuity of style will not reappear in philosophy until that false and exaggerated admiration of the dialectic unity of method,

which still fetters men's minds, whenever a new work appears, written according to this method, shall have given way; and philosophical science will then again speak an intelligible language, as human beings are wont to do, when it is compelled to give up its unintelligible, divine utterances — *alias* dialectic categories.

The dialectic method is a logical hypothesis. Is it, then, so difficult to come to clearness about its essence — its truth or untruth?

If by scientific procedure we mean one that is essentially necessary and universal, then the question that must arise for decision is simply this: *Is Hegel's dialectic method of pure thinking a scientific procedure?*

In view of the investigations already made, we must answer this question with a round negative. We do not mean by this that the dialectic method does not possess relatively even a certain scientific value. Such, indeed, it possesses, as a preparative, measured by the standard of the Aristotelian dialectic, inasmuch as it forces the concepts more sharply against each other, and defines them more clearly, whereas in the sense of being an absolute method it has no value whatever. Such it is not. It has exercised a powerful scientific influence by stretching the demands of Logic, but in so doing it has *over-stretched* itself. It possesses merely the importance of a relative reflection, but it is not an absolute production.

The proof of this has been adduced, the refutation has yet to be brought forward. Verily, it will not be brought by the differences which have already manifested themselves within the Hegelian Logic, and whereof, we hear, more may yet be expected. After a long period of haughty stability, such moving and bustle are signs of internal insecurity and actual disturbance. But a work so rigidly carved out of one thought as Hegel's *Logic* will go far to verify the saying: *Sint ut sunt, aut non sint.* Mending and bolstering up will be of no avail, as Plato warns us in the *Statesman:* "My good friend, it isn't safe to whittle here; it is much safer to cut right through the middle: one is much surer to come upon ideas."

The undersigned is prepared, with all seriousness, to take up the investigation anew, provided opposite arguments of

any moment are brought against him. But until a refutation is undertaken, let our friends at least leave off singing their old song about mental languidness and convenience, when scientific men do not recognize the dialectic method. A short time ago, something of this kind might have been read in a certain preface. If the investigation is shunned, the arrow may return and strike him who discharged it.

Science cannot live on criticism, which only expels what the living organism cannot assimilate. Where criticism reigns alone with its negativity, we are seized with a dull, heavy sense of discomfort, which necessarily accompanies such a process of decomposition. Decomposition and assimilation ought, on the contrary, as in breathing, to form but one activity. Then criticism, instead of repressing the life of science, increases it by purifying it. But since even Logic cannot satisfy itself with the mere critical result which rejects the dialectic method of pure thinking, the *Logical Investigations* entered, in a positive sense, into the facts of human thought, and tried to show that the science of the idea does not go down, but, on the contrary, becomes all the more certain, when the dialectic method, with its false sanctions, is rejected.

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## BOOK NOTICES.

WORKS OF DR. H. K. HUGO DELFF:

1. *Ideas of a Philosophical Science of Spirit and Nature.* Husum, 1865.
2. *Cecilia; or, Concerning the Truth of the Supersensuous.* A Dialogue with a Postscript. Husum, 1867.
3. *Fundamental Doctrines of Philosophical Science.* Husum, 1869.
4. *Dante Alighieri and the Divine Comedy.* Leipsig, 1870.
5. *The Idea of the Divine Comedy.* A Study. Leipsig, 1871.

The two works on Dante by Mr. Delff have attracted so much attention in Germany, that it may not be considered out of place in this Journal to bring them also to the notice of the American public, and especially of those whom Longfellow's translation of the Italian poet must have interested more or less in Dante-literature generally. Mr. Delff's works on the Divine Comedy have this distinguishing merit, that the author brings to his task the results of a life-long study of mystical literature, to which Dante's work is generally held to belong. This thorough knowledge of the mystical writings of all times enables the author to illustrate his exposition in the most varied and instructive manner. Most particularly felicitous is his sketch of the political, ecclesiastical, and philosophical revolutions and conditions that preceded Dante, and that form the basis from which Mr. Delff starts his interpretation of Dante's life and works. This sketch evinces, moreover, a rare comprehension of the early *status* of the